

# Residence Criteria and Residence Situations for the 2020 Census of the United States

## WHERE YOU ARE COUNTED IS IMPORTANT

The U.S. Census Bureau is committed to counting every person in the 2020 Census once, only once, and in the right place. The fundamental reason that the decennial census is conducted is to fulfill the Constitutional requirement (Article I, Section 2) to apportion the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the states.<sup>1</sup> For a fair and equitable apportionment, it is crucial that the Census Bureau counts everyone in the right place during the decennial census.

## THE CONCEPT OF USUAL RESIDENCE

The Census Bureau's enumeration procedures are guided by the constitutional and statutory mandates to count all residents of the several states. [U.S. Const. Art. 1, Section 2, cl.3, Title 13, United States Code, Section 141.] The state in which a person resides and the specific location within that state is determined in accordance with the concept of “usual residence,” which is defined by the Census Bureau as the place where a person lives and sleeps most of the time. This is not always the same as a person’s legal residence, voting residence, or where they prefer to be counted. This concept of “usual residence” is grounded in the law providing for the first census, the Act of March 1, 1790, expressly specifying that persons be enumerated at their “usual place of abode.”

Determining usual residence is straightforward for most people. However, given our nation’s wide diversity in types of living arrangements, the concept of usual residence has a variety of applications. Some examples of these living arrangements include people experiencing homelessness, people with a seasonal/second residence, people in group facilities,<sup>2</sup> people in the process of moving, people in hospitals, children in shared custody arrangements, college students, live-in employees, military personnel, and people who live in workers’ dormitories.

Applying the usual residence concept to real living situations means that people will not always be counted at the place where they happen to be staying on Census Day (April 1, 2020) or at the time they complete their census questionnaire. Therefore, this document lists many specific residence situations after defining the residence criteria, in order to illustrate how the criteria are applied.

## THE RESIDENCE CRITERIA

The Residence Criteria are used to determine where people are counted during the 2020 Census. The Criteria say:

- Count people at their usual residence, which is the place where they live and sleep most of the time.
- People in certain types of group facilities on Census Day are counted at the group facility.
- People who do not have a usual residence, or who cannot determine a usual residence, are counted where they are on Census Day.

The following sections describe how the Residence Criteria apply to certain living situations for which people commonly request clarification.

---

<sup>1</sup> Apportionment is based on the resident population, plus a count of overseas federal employees, for each of the 50 states. Redistricting data include the resident population of the 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

<sup>2</sup> In this document, “group facilities” (referred to also as “group quarters” (GQ)) are defined as places where people live or stay in group living arrangements, which are owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents.

1. **PEOPLE AWAY FROM THEIR USUAL RESIDENCE ON CENSUS DAY**
  - a) *People away from their usual residence on Census Day, such as on a vacation or a business trip, visiting, traveling outside the United States, or working elsewhere without a usual residence there (for example, as a truck driver or traveling salesperson)* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time.
2. **VISITORS ON CENSUS DAY**
  - a) *Visitors on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual residence to return to, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
3. **FOREIGN CITIZENS IN THE UNITED STATES**
  - a) *Citizens of foreign countries living in the United States* - Counted at the U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time.
  - b) *Citizens of foreign countries living in the United States who are members of the diplomatic community* - Counted at the embassy, consulate, United Nations' facility, or other residences where diplomats live.
  - c) *Citizens of foreign countries visiting the United States, such as on a vacation or business trip* - Not counted in the census.
4. **PEOPLE LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES**
  - a) *People deployed outside the United States<sup>3</sup> on Census Day (while stationed or assigned in the United States) who are military or civilian employees of the U.S. government* - Counted at the U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time, using administrative data provided by federal agencies.<sup>4</sup>
  - b) *People stationed or assigned outside the United States on Census Day who are military or civilian employees of the U.S. government, as well as their dependents living with them outside the United States* - Counted as part of the U.S. federally affiliated overseas population, using administrative data provided by federal agencies.
  - c) *People living outside the United States on Census Day who are not military or civilian employees of the U.S. government and are not dependents living with military or civilian employees of the U.S. government* - Not counted in the stateside census.
5. **PEOPLE WHO LIVE OR STAY IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE**
  - a) *People living away most of the time while working, such as people who live at a residence close to where they work and return regularly to another residence* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.

---

<sup>3</sup> In this document, "Outside the United States" and "foreign port" are defined as being anywhere outside the geographical area of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia. Therefore, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Pacific Island Areas (American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), and all foreign countries are considered to be "outside the United States." Conversely, "stateside," "U.S. homeport," and "U.S. port" are defined as being anywhere in the 50 United States and the District of Columbia.

<sup>4</sup> Military and civilian employees of the U.S. government who are deployed or stationed/assigned outside the United States (and their dependents living with them outside the United States) are counted using administrative data provided by the Department of Defense and the other federal agencies that employ them. If they are deployed outside the United States (while stationed/assigned in the United States), the administrative data are used to count them at their usual residence in the United States. Otherwise, if they are stationed/assigned outside the United States, the administrative data are used to count them (and their dependents living with them outside the United States) in their home state for apportionment purposes only.

- b) *People who live or stay at two or more residences (during the week, month, or year), such as people who travel seasonally between residences (for example, snowbirds)* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- c) *Children in shared custody or other arrangements who live at more than one residence* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.

#### 6. PEOPLE MOVING INTO OR OUT OF A RESIDENCE AROUND CENSUS DAY

- a) *People who move into a new residence on or before Census Day* - Counted at the new residence where they are living on Census Day.
- b) *People who move out of a residence on Census Day and do not move into a new residence until after Census Day* - Counted at the old residence where they were living on Census Day.
- c) *People who move out of a residence before Census Day and do not move into a new residence until after Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they are staying on Census Day.

#### 7. PEOPLE WHO ARE BORN OR WHO DIE AROUND CENSUS DAY

- a) *Babies born on or before Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they will live and sleep most of the time, even if they are still in a hospital on Census Day.
- b) *Babies born after Census Day* - Not counted in the census.
- c) *People who die before Census Day* - Not counted in the census.
- d) *People who die on or after Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they were living and sleeping most of the time as of Census Day.

#### 8. RELATIVES AND NONRELATIVES

- a) *Babies and children of all ages, including biological, step, and adopted children, as well as grandchildren* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day. (Only count babies born on or before Census Day.)
- b) *Foster children* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- c) *Spouses and close relatives, such as parents or siblings* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- d) *Extended relatives, such as grandparents, nieces/nephews, aunts/uncles, cousins, or in-laws* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- e) *Unmarried partners* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- f) *Housemates or roommates* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- g) *Roomers or boarders* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.
- h) *Live-in employees, such as caregivers or domestic workers* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.

- i) *Other nonrelatives, such as friends* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.

## 9. PEOPLE IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL-RELATED FACILITIES

- a) *Boarding school students living away from their parents' or guardians' home while attending boarding school below the college level, including Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools* - Counted at their parents' or guardians' home.
- b) *Students in residential schools for people with disabilities on Census Day* - Counted at the school.
- c) *Staff members living at boarding schools or residential schools for people with disabilities on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the school.

## 10. COLLEGE STUDENTS (and Staff Living in College Housing)

- a) *College students living at their parents' or guardians' home while attending college in the United States* - Counted at their parents' or guardians' home.
- b) *College students living away from their parents' or guardians' home while attending college in the United States (living either on-campus or off-campus)* - Counted at the on-campus or off-campus residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they are living in college/university student housing (such as dormitories or residence halls) on Census Day, they are counted at the college/university student housing.
- c) *College students living away from their parents' or guardians' home while attending college in the United States (living either on-campus or off-campus) but staying at their parents' or guardians' home while on break or vacation* - Counted at the on-campus or off-campus residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they are living in college/university student housing (such as dormitories or residence halls) on Census Day, they are counted at the college/university student housing.
- d) *College students who are U.S. citizens living outside the United States while attending college outside the United States* - Not counted in the stateside census.
- e) *College students who are foreign citizens living in the United States while attending college in the United States (living either on-campus or off-campus)* - Counted at the on-campus or off-campus U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they are living in college/university student housing (such as dormitories or residence halls) on Census Day, they are counted at the college/university student housing.
- f) *Staff members living in college/university student housing (such as dormitories or residence halls) on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the college/university student housing.

## 11. PEOPLE IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

- a) *People in general or Veterans Affairs hospitals (except psychiatric units) on Census Day, including newborn babies still in the hospital on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. Newborn babies are counted at the residence where they will live and sleep most of the time. If patients or staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the hospital.
- b) *People in mental (psychiatric) hospitals and psychiatric units in other hospitals (where the primary function is for long-term non-acute care) on Census Day* - Patients are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

- c) *People in assisted living facilities<sup>5</sup> where care is provided for individuals who need help with the activities of daily living but do not need the skilled medical care that is provided in a nursing home* - Residents and staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time.
- d) *People in nursing facilities/skilled-nursing facilities (which provide long-term non-acute care) on Census Day* - Patients are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- e) *People staying at in-patient hospice facilities on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If patients or staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

## 12. PEOPLE IN HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS

- a) *People in housing intended for older adults, such as active adult communities, independent living, senior apartments, or retirement communities* - Residents and staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time.

## 13. U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL

- a) *U.S. military personnel assigned to military barracks/dormitories in the United States on Census Day* - Counted at the military barracks/dormitories.
- b) *U.S. military personnel (and dependents living with them) living in the United States (living either on base or off base) who are not assigned to barracks/dormitories on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time.
- c) *U.S. military personnel assigned to U.S. military vessels with a U.S. homeport on Census Day* - Counted at the onshore U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they have no onshore U.S. residence, they are counted at their vessel's homeport.
- d) *People who are active duty patients assigned to a military treatment facility in the United States on Census Day* - Patients are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- e) *People in military disciplinary barracks and jails in the United States on Census Day* - Prisoners are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- f) *U.S. military personnel who are deployed outside the United States (while stationed in the United States) and are living on or off a military installation outside the United States on Census Day* - Counted at the U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time, using administrative data provided by the Department of Defense.
- g) *U.S. military personnel who are stationed outside the United States and are living on or off a military installation outside the United States on Census Day, as well as their dependents living with them outside the United States* - Counted as part of the U.S. federally affiliated overseas population, using administrative data provided by the Department of Defense.

---

<sup>5</sup> Nursing facilities/skilled-nursing facilities, in-patient hospice facilities, assisted living facilities, and housing intended for older adults may coexist within the same entity or organization in some cases. For example, an assisted living facility may have a skilled-nursing floor or wing that meets the nursing facility criteria, which means that specific floor or wing is counted according to the guidelines for nursing facilities/skilled-nursing facilities, while the rest of the living quarters in that facility are counted according to the guidelines for assisted living facilities.

- h) *U.S. military personnel assigned to U.S. military vessels with a homeport outside the United States on Census Day* - Counted as part of the U.S. federally affiliated overseas population, using administrative data provided by the Department of Defense.

**14. MERCHANT MARINE PERSONNEL ON U.S. FLAG MARITIME/MERCHANT VESSELS**

- a) *Crews of U.S. flag maritime/merchant vessels docked in a U.S. port, sailing from one U.S. port to another U.S. port, sailing from a U.S. port to a foreign port, or sailing from a foreign port to a U.S. port on Census Day* - Counted at the onshore U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they have no onshore U.S. residence, they are counted at their vessel. If the vessel is docked in a U.S. port, sailing from a U.S. port to a foreign port, or sailing from a foreign port to a U.S. port, crewmembers with no onshore U.S. residence are counted at the U.S. port. If the vessel is sailing from one U.S. port to another U.S. port, crewmembers with no onshore U.S. residence are counted at the port of departure.
- b) *Crews of U.S. flag maritime/merchant vessels engaged in U.S. inland waterway transportation on Census Day* - Counted at the onshore U.S. residence where they live and sleep most of the time.
- c) *Crews of U.S. flag maritime/merchant vessels docked in a foreign port or sailing from one foreign port to another foreign port on Census Day* - Not counted in the stateside census.

**15. PEOPLE IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES FOR ADULTS**

- a) *People in federal and state prisons on Census Day* - Prisoners are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- b) *People in local jails and other municipal confinement facilities on Census Day* - Prisoners are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- c) *People in federal detention centers on Census Day, such as Metropolitan Correctional Centers, Metropolitan Detention Centers, Bureau of Indian Affairs Detention Centers, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Service Processing Centers, and ICE contract detention facilities* - Prisoners are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- d) *People in correctional residential facilities on Census Day, such as halfway houses, restitution centers, and prerelease, work release, and study centers* - Residents are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

**16. PEOPLE IN GROUP HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS FOR ADULTS**

- a) *People in group homes intended for adults (non-correctional) on Census Day* - Residents are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- b) *People in residential treatment centers for adults (non-correctional) on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If residents or staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

## **17. PEOPLE IN JUVENILE FACILITIES**

- a) *People in correctional facilities intended for juveniles on Census Day* - Juvenile residents are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- b) *People in group homes for juveniles (non-correctional) on Census Day* - Juvenile residents are counted at the facility. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- c) *People in residential treatment centers for juveniles (non-correctional) on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If juvenile residents or staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

## **18. PEOPLE IN TRANSITORY LOCATIONS**

- a) *People at transitory locations such as recreational vehicle (RV) parks, campgrounds, hotels and motels, hostels, marinas, racetracks, circuses, or carnivals* - Anyone, including staff members, staying at the transitory location is counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual home elsewhere, or they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted at the transitory location.

## **19. PEOPLE IN WORKERS' RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES**

- a) *People in workers' group living quarters and Job Corps Centers on Census Day* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If residents or staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.

## **20. PEOPLE IN RELIGIOUS-RELATED RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES**

- a) *People in religious group quarters, such as convents and monasteries, on Census Day* - Counted at the facility.

## **21. PEOPLE IN SHELTERS AND PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

- a) *People in domestic violence shelters on Census Day* - People staying at the shelter (who are not staff) are counted at the shelter. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the shelter.
- b) *People who, on Census Day, are in temporary group living quarters established for victims of natural disasters* - Anyone, including staff members, staying at the facility is counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the facility.
- c) *People who, on Census Day, are in emergency and transitional shelters with sleeping facilities for people experiencing homelessness* - People staying at the shelter (who are not staff) are counted at the shelter. Staff members are counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If staff members do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the shelter.
- d) *People who, on Census Day, are at soup kitchens and regularly scheduled mobile food vans that provide food to people experiencing homelessness* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they do not have a usual home elsewhere, they are counted at the soup kitchen or mobile food van location where they are on Census Day.
- e) *People who, on Census Day, are at targeted non-sheltered outdoor locations where people experiencing homelessness stay without paying* - Counted at the outdoor location where they are on Census Day.

- f) *People who, on Census Day, are temporarily displaced or experiencing homelessness and are staying in a residence for a short or indefinite period of time* - Counted at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time. If they cannot determine a place where they live most of the time, they are counted where they are staying on Census Day.